

referred to Fidel Castro as a cold-blooded killer. The Cuban military shootdown of two unarmed American planes is not only a contemptible act of depravity but also reaffirms Castro's title of cold-blooded killer. The four Americans citizens in small Cessnas had no chance against the supersonic war planes sent to intercept and destroy them. For what crimes against humanity were they destroyed? Their crimes were in providing private humanitarian assistance to the Cuban refugees drifting in the open ocean. This indecent act reaffirms those old lessons of the cold war period that Communist dictators are totally brutal in their dealing with anyone weaker. They will violate any international law whenever it suits them. Shame on those congressional Democrats who have gone to Cuba in an attempt to normalize relations with this brutal dictator. Shame on President Clinton for waiting for this tragedy before deciding to support the Helms-Burton Cuban liberty bill, of which I was an original cosponsor. Mr. Speaker, it is time for the President of the United States to stop hiding behind the United Nations and send a clear and forceful message to Castro.

MAKE AMERICA STRONGER THROUGH EDUCATION

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during the recess I attended an education forum in conjunction with the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Gerald Tirozzi and Democratic leader DICK GEPHARDT at Travis Elementary School in my district in Houston, TX. With the uncertainty over funding levels for elementary and secondary education programs and the likelihood of deep budget cuts, schools all across our country are having a difficult time planning for next year and may even be forced to lay off teachers. The immediate result could be fewer teachers, larger classes, and a decline in the quality of education. We heard from teachers, parents, school administrators, police officers, as well as church officials, who are scared to death that their children will not be getting the proper preparation they need to compete and win in the new global marketplace.

We all believe in a balanced budget, deficit reduction, and cutting bureaucracy, but we all agreed that cutting education programs is the wrong way to achieve these goals. How can we make America stronger if we are not willing to invest in the future of America, with our young people's education?

Mr. Speaker, drastic cuts in title I, Goals 2000, the Safe and Drug Free Schools, and all other educational programs will cause irreparable harm not just to students in Travis Elementary

in my district but students all across the country and Texas. It is wrong, and we should not do it.

THE LOOMING ECONOMIC CRUNCH

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has now been in the White House 3 years, 1 month, and 1 week. Under his watch, the national debt has gone up, taxes have gone up, and wages have remained stagnant. What is up should be down and what is down should be up.

Some economists now predict that the economy is on the verge of a recession. I hope that they are wrong, but let's not fool ourselves. The Clinton administration has pursued economic and tax policies that slow growth and stifle commercial activity. High taxes discourage risk-takers from expanding businesses, hiring new employees, or from starting new businesses.

Since Clinton took over as President, economic growth has been anemic and clearly has not matched the expansion we saw under President Reagan.

Americans are rightly concerned about a looming economic crunch caused by the antigrowth and pro-tax policies of the Clinton administration.

LET US RETURN TO THE PEOPLE'S BUSINESS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today the House returns from a month-long recess. Our return to work must begin a turn toward the people's business and away from the extremist special interest agenda that has dominated the first 14 months of this Congress.

The Republican majority has been in power for over a year now. And what do the American people have to show for it? Has this Congress given working men and women what they want and need?

American families want to know they can count on the secure dignified retirement they have worked so hard for. But Republicans in Congress want to cut Medicare and Medicaid.

Hard-working American families need a raise—so they can pay their bills. But congressional Republicans are cutting education and training at a time when workers need better skills to get a raise.

Mr. Speaker, in pursuit of their extremist agenda, the Republicans have launched an assault on working Americans struggling to get ahead. The American people deserve better. Let us put Congress where it belongs: back on the side of hard-working American families, not dancing to the tune of special interests.

UNCLE SAM RIPPED OFF AGAIN

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, McDonnell-Douglas, the giant defense contractor, once again has ripped off Uncle Sam big time.

Check this out: For a 4- by 7-inch door hook, \$9,000; a 2- by 4-inch hinge, \$1,090; a small 4-inch handle, aluminum handle, \$1,200. Reports say they charge in excess of 56 times the normal legal rate.

And after all this, McDonnell-Douglas says, "This is a mistake. We are very sorry." Mr. Speaker, beam me up. This is no mistake. This is a crime, and the criminals so responsible, that is right, criminals should go right to jail.

Mr. Speaker, "sorry" don't cut it. At least it should not.

Yield back the balance of all this rip-off.

DO NOT DEFAULT ON OUR DEBT PAYMENTS

(Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome back my colleagues here in the House, particularly the freshman Republicans. I particularly want to give a message of hope to my colleagues over the issue of the threatened default on our national debt payments and the concerns that many senior citizens across this country have that there is an agenda being pursued by this House that will end up forcing the default not only of our debt payments but a default on our commitment to Social Security as well.

I would just issue a warning that if we begin to bounce the checks of our Social Security payments to our commitments to our senior citizens, the senior citizens of this country might very well come back and bounce the freshman class. The truth of the matter is, if we are concerned about balancing the budget of this country, we can get no less than five separate versions of a balanced budget passed on the floor of this House today. It might not be the particular version that the freshman Republicans want, but it will be a version that will look out after the best interests of this country.

Mr. Speaker, let us balance the budget. Let us not default on our debt payments.

LET US ADDRESS PROBLEMS FAMILIES CARE ABOUT

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I guess I am surprised my Republican colleagues are not here today taking note of the fact it was only a year ago that this